



# Disabled Students' Guide



An SRC Advice Centre guide



## Introduction

# Advice for disabled students

According to Disability Rights UK, around [one fifth of the UK population are disabled](#), with the Office for Students reporting that students declaring a disability has [risen from 9% to around 18%](#) over the last 10 years. University of Glasgow's latest figures have recorded around 11-12% of students currently registered as being disabled.

Successfully navigating a challenging course with a disability often requires specific support to be put in place, encompassing a variety of areas across the University. This guide brings together the key areas of support, information and resources available for any disabled student studying at the University of Glasgow.

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**Introduction** continued

# What is a disability?

Some students with health challenges may not associate or identify with the term 'disability', however in terms of the Equality Act 2010, a person has a disability if they:

**"have a physical or mental impairment, and the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities".**



**'Substantial'** is defined by the Act as **'more than minor or trivial'** and **'impairment'** is considered to have a long-term effect if it has or is likely to last for at least 12 months or beyond.

In addition to the above definition, the University recognises [the 'social model' of disability](#), which defines disability as created by barriers in society such as inaccessible buildings, stereotyping, prejudice, and inflexible policies and practices. The University aims to eliminate such barriers.

Students with mental health conditions often don't recognise that they can engage with and receive the help from resources targeted at helping disabled students on campus.

For example, a student who has been on anti-depressants for 12 months, may not be aware that they are in fact considered, under the legal definition, to be disabled.

The SRC put together [this guide in 2021](#), which aims to demystify language associated with disability.



Introduction continued

# The Disability Service

Within the University, [the Disability Services team](#) help support students with [a range of conditions](#), including those with:

**Chronic medical or mental health conditions, Autism spectrum conditions, learning differences, and sensory or physical impairments**



## Chronic medical conditions

Such as:

- Arthritis,
- Crohn's disease,
- Chronic Fatigue Syndrome,
- Diabetes,
- Epilepsy,
- Heart conditions,
- Hepatitis,
- HIV,
- SLE / Lupus; and
- Ulcerative colitis.

## Mental health difficulties

Such as:

- Anxiety or panic disorder,
- Bi-Polar Disorder,
- Depression,
- Eating disorders,
- Obsessive compulsive disorder; and
- Schizophrenia.

## Learning differences

Such as:

- Attention Deficit (Hyperactivity) Disorder (AD(H)D),
- Dyscalculia,
- Dysgraphia,
- Dyslexia; and
- Dyspraxia Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD).

As well as students who are hard of hearing, visually impaired or have autism spectrum disorder.

All students with a disability are encouraged to make contact with this team. The first step to seeking support from the disability services team is to [register with them](#) and complete a [Study Support Request form](#).

You can do this as a registered student or if you have received an offer to study at the University. This process will ask you to upload any evidence of the challenges you are facing, however if you don't have much evidence, you should still complete this form to start this process.

## Accessing support

# What support can I access?

Once you are registered with the Disability Service, you will then have access to [a range of supportive measures and adjustments](#) to help you with your studies. You will be assigned a disability adviser who will meet with you to talk this through.

Common examples of help you might receive are:

- Extra time in exams, or exams taking place in a smaller or separate room,
- Flexibility with attendance and submissions,
- Teaching staff awareness,
- Accessibility / mobility measures put in place,
- One on One support via Mental Health Advisers on campus,
- Study skills and proofreading support,
- Use of a scribe in exams.

You can see a more detailed breakdown of assessment arrangements for students via the [University regulations outlined here](#).

Once you have adjustments / support in place, you will be able to view these from within your MyCampus using [this guide](#). Should you encounter a flare-up or worsening of a condition or receive a new diagnosis, adjustments can be reviewed and amended during the academic year.

You will also be informed whether you are able to access [the Disabled Students' Allowance](#) to help pay for additional equipment or support you may need on top of that already offered by the University.

Visit this webpage to [find examples of assistive technology](#) to help students with disabilities.



## Disability Co-ordinators

Consider making contact with a [Disability Co-Ordinator](#) within your school who can liaise with the Disability Service to make sure you are receiving the correct support. Their role is to promote and support disabled students as well as to promote disability equality more generally in their School. [You can see their role outlined here.](#)

## Counselling Service

The University has a team of dedicated [Counsellors](#) and [Wellbeing Officers](#) to help students manage their mental health and build strategies that will help them be successful with their studies.

Areas they may be able to assist with include:

- Anxiety,
- Bereavement,
- Relationship difficulties,
- Mild to moderate depression,
- Life changes; and
- Self-confidence and self-esteem.

The first step to seeking help from this team is to [register with their service here](#). You will then be given an initial 1-2-1 consultation so your needs can be fully understood, and next steps discussed.

This may involve:

- Short term, focussed blocks of therapy,
- Wellbeing Consultations,
- Psychoeducation and group work,
- Self-help resources.

The counselling team also have an extensive range of [self-help resources](#) that can be accessed, as well as a [range of masterclasses](#) which run throughout the year to help support you with:

- Managing exam stress,
- Sleep,
- Building resilience and managing stress,
- Low mood,
- Managing anxiety,
- Overcoming perfectionism,
- Motivation and overcoming procrastination,
- Managing change; and
- Building connection and overcoming loneliness.

The University provides students with a 24 hour, 365 days a year confidential [Helpline and App](#). Counsellors there are on hand to provide guidance and help students work through any concerns.

## Accessing support continued

### Student Listeners

The University recruits and trains students each year to become [Student Listeners](#). They are there to listen and help you explore how you are feeling in a non-judgemental way. As a student they will also have many shared experiences with you. You can [book a session with them here](#).

### Glasgow Students Nightline

Nightline is a confidential telephone, text, and online listening and information service run by trained student volunteers for the students of Glasgow University, Glasgow Caledonian and Strathclyde University. [You can find out more and contact them here](#).

### Academic Support

The [Student Learning and Development](#) team is a useful initial resource to explore more specific additional help and support to organise and develop your academic work.

During your studies you may face a decline in your health or face for the first time a health challenge that may affect your ability to meet an assessment deadline or sit an exam. Your main initial point of contact to raise any academic related questions or concerns will typically be with your [Adviser of Studies](#) or course convener / co-ordinator.

It's important to note and make use of the following available options should you need to:

### Extensions

If you are approaching a deadline and have suffered from adverse circumstances or illness, keep in mind that you are able to ask for an extension of up to 5 working days via a request to your course convener, adviser of studies or staff noted in your course handbook. This may be enough additional time for you to submit your work without the need for a Good Cause claim. [Visit the University website](#) for more information.

### Good Cause

This is the University system to support any student with either a health condition that has recently worsened significantly or an unexpected health or personal challenge. An overview of what circumstances might be considered Good Cause can be seen [on the University website](#). The SRC Advice Centre has [a guidance page with more information](#) and support.

### Fitness to Study

Where health challenges are not best managed via multiple extensions and multiple Good Cause claims and where challenges are more

profoundly affecting academic study, the University may trigger the [Fitness to Study](#) process.

This is a supportive process aimed at better understanding the nature of these challenges in more depth and assessing whether a leave of absence or continuation of study with support or measures in place is the most appropriate option.

### **Withdrawal of study**

Students who are undertaking their studies whilst also navigating unforeseen or long-term health challenges may reach a point in the year where they are overwhelmed with academic work and may wrongly think that a full withdrawal is the only answer. A review to see whether all the help and support that you are entitled to is in place would be a good first step to take. You should read over the [SRC Advice Centre's guidance page](#) with more information and support and also this [University guide](#).



## Accessing support continued

### Accessibility

The University also has an [accessibility guidance page](#) which provides information on:

- Finding your way around the University,
- Access guides to services and buildings using [AccessAble](#),
- Contact information for BSL users,
- Mobility scooter and wheelchair loans,
- Reporting issues with physical access on campus.

The University has an [Accessible & Inclusive Learning policy](#), the aim of which is to 'deliver the University's values of an inclusive community through the provision of accessible learning, teaching and assessment materials and methods'.

They have put together a [digital accessibility guide](#) for both students and staff which you can see. This provides a framework for making [webpages](#), documents, video and presentations accessible for everyone. Each system adopted by the University comes with it's own [accessibility statement](#) and the University is transparent on [specific areas that are not yet compliant](#) and are being looked at. You can also view the [Recording of Teaching Policy](#) to understand how this may be able to support you in your studies.

[Assistance dogs](#) are welcome on campus and for any events run on Campus, the University has an [Accessible Events Policy](#) to make sure that these fulfil obligations under the Equality Act 2010.



## Library

The library aims to 'provide an environment where there is equality of opportunity and where disabled people have equal access to our services and collections'. All levels are accessible from street level 2 via lift.

They have a [disability policy](#) that you can refer to, which covers additional help for disabled students, including:

- Frontline staff trained to respond to the needs of disabled students,
- Longer loan periods,
- Fetching service,
- Proxy borrowing,
- Visiting with a helper/assistance dog.

The library has a Disability Co-ordinator who acts as a first point of contact for Library users with disabilities. You can make contact with them via [library-disability@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:library-disability@glasgow.ac.uk)

## Careers

The University has a [Careers Service](#) you can contact to seek guidance on your future beyond University. They have some additional resources to help disabled students, via an agreement with [EmployAbility](#). Once [registered](#) with EmployAbility you will have access to:

- Group events and workshops,
- 1-2-1 consultancy and advocacy support,
- Information and support on graduate opportunities.





## Further information

# How the University reviews disability policies

The University carries out periodic work to review disability related policies and processes at the University, primarily via:

- Meetings of the [Disability Equality Group](#), chaired by the University [Disability Equality Champion](#)
- Meetings of the [Learning & Teaching Committee](#)
- Meetings of the [Disability Review Implementation Group](#)
- Meetings of the [Equality & Diversity Strategy Committee](#) to review the [Equality & Diversity Policy](#)
- Review of the [Accessible & Inclusive Learning Policy](#)



# Other resources:

## University of Glasgow Equality & Diversity disabled students' page

[www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/equalitydiversity/students/disabled](http://www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/equalitydiversity/students/disabled)

## University of Glasgow neurodiversity resource hub

[www.gla.ac.uk/schools/cancersciences/athena/neurodiversityresourcehub](http://www.gla.ac.uk/schools/cancersciences/athena/neurodiversityresourcehub)

## University of Glasgow disability appendix

[www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/equalitydiversity/policy/equalitypolicy/app-d](http://www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/equalitydiversity/policy/equalitypolicy/app-d)

## University of Glasgow Content advice guidelines

[www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/apg/policies/studentsupport/contentadvice/](http://www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/apg/policies/studentsupport/contentadvice/)

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[www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/apg/policies/uniregs/regulations2022-23/feesandgeneral/studentsupportandconductmatters/reg4/](http://www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/apg/policies/uniregs/regulations2022-23/feesandgeneral/studentsupportandconductmatters/reg4/)

## University of Glasgow British Sign Language (BSL) action plan

[www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/equalitydiversity/bsl/](http://www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/equalitydiversity/bsl/)

